



Worth the Investment

We're always asked how we measure the effectiveness of our advertising. Over the years Travel Montana has done studies of our inquiries to determine the return on how our advertising dollars translate into money spent in Montana. Last year we entered into an innovative partnership with American Express and Delta Airlines that would give us a direct correlation between our advertising efforts and money that came into the state. The results are now in, and frankly, we're blown away.

The marketing campaign was twofold. A 12-page Montana Travel Planner insert was featured in the March 2000 issue of *Travel and Leisure* and the April 2000 issue of *Food & Wine*. The combined circulation for both publications was 950,000. In addition to the magazine inserts, 48,202 travel planners were direct mailed to American Express cardmembers in targeted markets selected by Travel Montana that have shown the most potential for people to visit our state. The targeted cardholders resided in California, Colorado, Washington DC, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nevada, New York, Pennsylvania, Texas, Washington and Utah. American Express agreed to measure how many of the targeted cardmembers actually

did travel to Montana and then tracked their spending on the American Express card while they were in the state. The time frame for measuring expenditures was March 1, 2000 through December 31, 2000.

Analysis from the direct mail concluded that of among the 48,202 who received the travel planner, 8,142 (16.89%) had travel-related charges in Montana during the nine-month period that was being measured. The breakdown of the visitor expenditures is as follows:

Retail	\$2,762,373	45%
Lodging	\$1,003,531	17%
Entertainment	\$ 692,708	12%
Restaurant	\$ 502,137	8%
All Other	\$1,608,025	18%

In total, \$6,028,774 was charged on the American Express card in Montana! "We are thrilled with the results," said Travel Montana Director Matthew Cohn. "Travel Montana invested \$200,000 into this marketing campaign and the state's businesses and communities received a measurable \$6 million return. A 30 to 1 return on investment is pretty astounding." Furthermore, Cohn noted that there were probably numerous other expenditures made that were not charged

to a credit card. "This partnership proved to give us the best bang for our buck. Because of the success of this campaign we will continue to investigate these types of marketing opportunities in the future."

First Quarter Statewide "Bed Tax" Collections Slightly Down

Preliminary "bed tax" figures for the first three months of 2001 were down 2% compared to the same time period last year. From January-March, 2001, \$2,090,113 in statewide "bed tax" monies were collected, compared to \$2,124,026 collected in 2000.

"We believe the lack of snow in some parts of the state reflects the decline in revenue collections for this time period," said Travel Montana Director Matthew Cohn. However, Cohn added, on the bright side the Big Sky area had better snow conditions and new facilities that contributed to stronger numbers. "We think that aggressive marketing efforts and added air service to this region is paying off. Our nonresident visitor is recognizing that Montana has a high-quality winter product."

Missouri River Country led the tourism regions with a 22% growth. Yellowstone Country and Custer Country were both up 1%. Gold West held even, while Russell Country reported a 2% decline and Glacier Country was down 10%.

The legislative session gave Helena the boost to top the community collections with a 12% increase, while Missoula grew 7%. Billings, Bozeman, Butte, Great Falls, Kalispell, West Yellowstone and Whitefish all reported collection declines.

Did You Know?

- Travel Montana's Publicity Office received a first-place award for its quarterly publication "Untold Story Leads," from the Western Chapter of the Society of American Travel Writers.
- The photographs of Travel Montana's Publication Manager, Donnie Sexton, appear in the new book "Montana's Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument," by Rick and Susie Graetz.
- Travelers Rest, near Lolo, became Montana's 42nd state park in March.
- A Montana State Parks Passport is now available for purchase on the Fish, Wildlife and Parks website fwp.state.mt.us/parks.
- Big Sky Resort was the first ski resort open for the 2001-2002 season. A spring storm left the mountain with nearly three feet of snow and they opened for skiing on June 14.
- The Grand Union Hotel in Fort Benton received a national restoration award from the Victorian Society of America.

Covering the Map

The consumer marketing program and Wendt Kochman Advertising have teamed up to shoot new film footage to be used for future Travel Montana television commercials and promotional activities. The crew is covering the map to shoot an array of scenics, attractions and historic sites. Special attention is being given to Lewis and Clark and Native American sites. "Because of the high cost of shooting film we have not had new footage for seven years," said Matthew Cohn. "The new shots will complement our current advertising campaign." Shooting is expected to be completed by mid-July.

In the Footsteps of Lewis and Clark

Twenty-one tour operators from across the country retraced the footsteps of Lewis and Clark with a 12-day tour throughout the states of Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota and Montana. Travel Montana's Group Travel Specialist, Marlee Iverson, joined the group at Fort Union and escorted them to Miles City, Pompeys Pillar, Billings, Headwaters State Park, Gates of the Mountains, and the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center in Great Falls. Overall the group spent three days in Montana. The tour was well received and many of the participants are eager to continue their Lewis and Clark trek with a 2002 fam tour, which will start in Oregon and end in Montana. If you are interested in learning more about the tour operators give Marlee a call at 406-444-4107 or e-mail marlee@visitmt.com.

Film Office News

Film Office Manager Sten Iversen recently traveled to Los Angeles to represent Montana at Show Biz Expo. The three-day event is one of the entertainment industry's largest shows. Sten reports that hundreds of industry professionals stopped by the Montana booth expressing interest in the state. The film office has already responded to 60 leads collected at the event.

Film Office Productions for 2001

Commercials

MacKenzie River Pizza—Bozeman
Molson Beer—Glacier National Park, Polson
Prudential Insurance—Billings
Toyota Tacoma—Bozeman/Livingston areas
The Yellowstone Club—Big Sky

Still Shoots

Lands' End Catalog—Bozeman/Big Sky areas
Marlboro Classic Clothing—Butte, Virginia City

Television

American Justice—Cooke City
The Big House—Deer Lodge
Experience America—Garnet ghost town, Glacier Park area
Reading Rainbow—Helmville
Transcontinental Railroad—Helena

And They Say Nothing is Free

If you are a Montana tourism business be on the lookout for your Travel Montana survey form in the mail. The survey will allow you to update or add information about your

business for your free listings in the Montana Travel Planner and Travel Montana's consumer website, www.visitmt.com. Travel Montana's 1-800-VISIT MT travel counselors will also use this material. Please fill out the survey, as this is your opportunity to make sure Travel Montana has the most current description of what you have to offer our visitors. Included with your survey will be a rate sheet for advertising in the Travel Planner. Travel Montana will be handling all of the advertising inquiries. Deadline for reserving ad space is August 6, 2001. For more information call Publications Manager Donnie Sexton at 406-444-2636.

Staff Update

Sten Iversen who has been the acting Film Office Manager has been appointed as the full-time Film Office Manager. Good luck Sten.

Alternative accessible formats of this document will be provided to disabled persons on request.

Calendar of Events

July

11-16 "Waterways Though Glacier Country" Fam Tour, Glacier Country

August

1 Deadline TIIP and CTAP Applications
6 Deadline Travel Planner
7-13 "Home on the Range" Fam Tour, Russell and Missouri River Countries

For all of the latest Montana tourism industry information log on to Travel Montana's Intranet site: travelmontana.state.mt.us.



Travel Montana

1424 Ninth Avenue
PO Box 200533
Helena, MT 59620-0533

Bulk Rate
U.S. Postage
PAID
Helena, MT
Permit No. 20